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“THE TRUE AMERICAN UNION” OF CHURCH AND STATE: THE RECONSTRUCTION OF THE THEOCRATIC TRADITION

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Modern studies of church and state in America have begun to modify some older conclusions. Much attention has been given to the Constitutional “solution” of separation and its contradictions and problems in practice. Similarly, church historians, qualifying an older assumption that conservative churches ultimately shed the forms of “classic Protestantism” and permitted American religion to be shaped by the sectarian heritage of the radical Reformation, have begun to re-examine the background of ideas. This re-examination is urgently needed in treating America’s last disestablishment contest, the struggle over the state churches in New England which raged until the 1820’s. For this struggle had unusual significance. It was no unimportant sequel to the work of the Revolutionary generation, but involved problems, controversies, and results all notably different from those of earlier conflicts. Moreover, after disestablishment, New England in some measure retained the ideal of a Christian commonwealth which had been the heart of her Puritan civilization for two centuries. Accordingly, study of this subject can throw valuable light on later New England history and, more importantly, on the place of the theocratic outlook in American intellectual history.

In New England the Congregational Establishment relaxed its hold gradually. Instead of resisting intransigently until at length overcome by legal separation with its Jeffersonian and sectarian pre-suppositions, the New England churches abandoned the old order of church-state relations for a more moderate position before the end of the 1780’s, that is, by the same time that more sweeping ecclesiastical changes were taking place elsewhere in the Union. Then in the debate which followed in the next three decades churchmen sought to eclipse demands for “religious liberty” (already largely conceded in their view) with appeals for the preservation of a Christian civilization. Indeed, so numerous, able, and vocal were conservative spokesmen that though church and state were finally separated, little surrender of Puritan axioms was necessary. Thus the older New England tradition, now adjusted and modernized, flourished and spread, surrounding legal separation with the ancient Puritan assumptions, all proclaiming the United States a broadly confessional republic, with “Moses and Aaron united in counsel . . . the true American union, of which no Christian and no patriot can ever be ashamed.”¹ On the basis of this solution the

theocratic tradition was to become not only viable, but vigorous; not only strong in Congregational New England, but influential throughout the North and Middle-West; not only prominent in the decades before the Civil War, but present in an abiding heritage of Christian nationhood and citizenship which is yet an important theme in American attitudes towards religion and politics.

This reconstruction of the Puritan tradition can be followed through these several stages. But first it is necessary to characterize briefly the original Puritan position and its crisis in the late eighteenth century when New England's exclusive Congregationalism was sacrificed and even its theocratic ideal in danger of collapse.

I

New England, as John Norton said, was a plantation religious. The Puritan founders, fundamentally theocratic, believed that both church and state, as two instruments of a Christian society with but a single vision, were to labor for the implementation of God's reign in the world. Nowhere was there any temptation to surrender the world to corruption and sin, but rather a determination to discipline it to God's will.²

This ideal of a Christian commonwealth had determined the original shape of the Puritan republics in Massachusetts and Connecticut, both in conception and law.³ First of all, in both colonies there was some retention of the outlook of a territorial church. This was evident in the insistence that the church should not be isolated within society, but acknowledge responsibility for the whole people, regenerate and unregenerate alike. It should seek not only the spiritual welfare of the saints but the construction of a Christian civilization as well. In this respect Puritan ambitions were similar to those of Laud. Secondly, Puritan statesmen were still wedded to the idea of a Christian magistracy. The state was not a secular institution, blind to distinctions between Christians and unbelievers, and knowing men only as subjects. Magistrates must be informed by true religion, and the laws which they execute must reflect the determination of society to implement God's revealed will. In particular, they must serve the true church, laboring that "a right opinion and worship of God should be openly professed." Lastly, ever since its origin in Tudor times, Puritanism had seen church and state as bound in some sort of moral symmetry, two administrations of the same religious purpose, each sensitively dependent upon the real condition of the other. Like the twins of Hippocrates, to use a favorite figure, they were held by sympathetic ties so strong that spiritual and political health or sickness could never be isolated but always went together.⁴

Inevitably, these assumptions found expression in law. The concern for a Christian society was seen in an early act of the Massachusetts General Court, soon to be copied at Hartford and New Haven, providing for public worship of God. On this basis the government authorized particular Congregational churches, collected ecclesiastical taxes, and enforced uniform standards of truth and godliness. Equally important was the determination to preserve the confessional character of the magistracy. From the first the state's Congregational allegiance had been assumed, and this became explicit in 1651 when the General Court formally embraced the Cambridge Platform and accounted "themselues called of God (especially at this time, when the truth of Christ is so much opposed in the world) to giue theire testimony to the sd Booke of Discipline, that for the substance thereof it is that we haue practised & doe beleue." Even Connecticut, more experimental than Massachusetts, lived by a constitution which dedicated the colony to "the disciplyne of the Churches which . . . is now practised amongst us." Finally, there was always some attempt to legislate for the sensitive mutuality which prevailed in church-state relations. In Massachusetts this assumed the form of the historic safeguard of 1631 that "noe man shalbe admitted to the freedome of this body polliticke, but such as are members of some of the churches within the lymitts of the same." New Haven had followed suit, while in Hartford church membership was required only of the governor.⁵ Variation was possible because none of the colonies believed that the church should possess civil dominion. Yet all were convinced of the profound interdependence of the two orders and therefore of the necessity of some constitutional provision by which the harmony and health of the whole could be assured.

But by the end of the 1780's this ecclesiastical system was in decay. Its position in law had been swept away, and its intellectual supports were being undermined by new and hostile traditions, now ascendant in the New England states. To be sure, the alteration in law was not so radical as in the Southern states. Some provision was still made for public worship, but it had long ceased to be a Congregational monopoly. Beginning in 1727 with a concession to Anglicans, the two colonies had found it necessary to fall in with a policy of excusing dissenters from financial responsibility toward the Establishment if they performed this service for their own denominations. Consequently, Congregationalism had become increasingly related only to its own communicants, though the state still co-operated in collecting their contribution to its support. Moreover, as this development implied, the confessional commitment of the state had now given way to an increasing denominational neutrality, and toleration, granted in practice

since the close of the seventeenth century, found its way into law as well. Lastly, the constitutional safeguards of a harmonious relationship of church and state for which the first governments had attempted to provide had not survived the political readjustments of the late seventeenth century. Thus the major legal sources of Congregational dominance had been successfully attacked.⁶ The extent of the retreat from the old order was made clear in the Revolutionary era. The Massachusetts constitution of 1780, while commending "public teachers of piety, religion, and morality," stated that "every denomination of Christians . . . shall be equally under the protection of the law: and no subordination of any one sect or denomination to another shall ever be established by law." Four years later Connecticut followed with a new and enlarged toleration act and dropped any official connection with the Saybrook Platform. Accordingly, John and Samuel Adams, even before these last developments, could declare, "There is, indeed, an ecclesiastical establishment in our province; but a very slender one, hardly to be called an establishment."⁷

The breakdown was as apparent in New England's intellectual history as in constitutional developments. For one thing, the principle of separation upheld by the dissenting bodies had made great headway by the end of the Revolution. This principle, indeed, found support in the mentality of Puritanism itself. If Puritans viewed the church as responsible for the total community, they also knew it as the "gathered" congregation of saints. If they retained Christian magistracy, they qualified it by scrupulous separation of the two administrations in their practical operation. If they taught the mutual dependence of church and state, their thought also envisaged the possibility of a state to which natural law would be the exclusive and sufficient foundation (as in Rhode Island). Long a disturbing presence in religious controversies, these ideas became a major force in New England history with the Baptists. Proclaiming an exclusive society of believers and public office open to all, Baptists recalled to prominence issues in Puritan thinking which had been compromised in the Half-Way Covenant and Stoddardeanism. It was no accident that under the impact of the Great Awakening, Congregationalism divided, "Separate" congregations took on the dissenter view, and sentiment grew for "a fundamental principle of our constitution, that religious ministers shall be supported only by Christ's authority, and not at all by assessment and secular force."⁸

Moreover, the natural rights philosophy had now grown from modest and aristocratic origins into a national liberal faith. Once again, New England had itself contributed to the result, since Puritanism's limited rationalism had grown in the benevolent climate of eighteenth-century opinion, and New England statesmen and clergy had drawn on

natural rights ideas to fashion the apologetics of colonial resistance.⁹ More important still, during the Revolution New England had become committed to a cause of which Franklin and Jefferson were the spokesmen and the Declaration of Independence the exposition. Because the new nation and its institutions were molded in this faith, the natural rights philosophy would stand at the center of the national myth in the future. Thus the concept of American destiny as a noble experiment in human rights was domesticated in the New England scene. In Jeffersonian orthodoxy and its vulgarizations this ideology was in obvious conflict with the Puritan heritage, but even in conservative expression the new national ideals were difficult to reconcile with the concept of a Christian commonwealth.

By the end of the 1780's, then, the ecclesiastical crisis of New England had become acute. And in the next decade the appearance of the Republican party brought the church question to sharpest focus. Here the fusion of political radicals with dissenters was completed, the antitheocratic traditions made politically relevant, and disestablishment transformed from a visionary ideal into an imminent possibility. Jeffersonian Baptists like John Leland expressed the new militancy: "The very idea of toleration is despicable. . . . All should be equally free, Jews, Turks, Pagans and Christians. . . . A general assessment (forcing all to pay some preacher) amounts to an establishment."¹⁰ Thus the stage was set for a final assault on the ancient New England ideal of a Christian republic. Could the Puritans' heirs so restate this ideal that it might again become relevant to the vision of an altered New England and to the wider American destiny to which New England had become committed?

II

Conservative New England's response to this crisis was forthcoming in the debate which continued until about 1820 when disestablishment, a fact in Connecticut and inevitable in Massachusetts, presented a new challenge and dilemma. Much of this response was unimaginative and conventional, but adjusted theories and new techniques laid tentative foundations for more radical reconstruction later.

Conditions were suitable for experimentation by the last decade of the century. Though challenged, Puritan axioms were probably still meaningful to most New Englanders and a Christian state a basic ingredient of their thinking. "We might as well expect a change in the solar system as to expect they would give up their establishment," went a Baptist report of a conversation with John Adams.¹¹ Furthermore, this determination drew strength from the post-Revolutionary political reaction which saw the church as a bulwark against social radicalism.

Already apparent in the Massachusetts constitution of 1780, this view assumed fresh authority when the French Revolution presented New England with the horrible example of the secular state. In the reaction some conservative champions at last began to respond realistically and creatively to the dangers threatening the Establishment and the principles which it reflected. Such intellectual leadership was found in a number of Congregational parsonages scattered over New England, but the Yale divines were the most important. For in Connecticut the dangers were more imminent, the controversy sharper, and theological issues less distracting. Yet the defenders of the Standing Order, notably President Timothy Dwight and his most famous student, Lyman Beecher, simply expressed more clearly apologetic trends also evident in Massachusetts.

Two principal lines of thought were explored. One was the idea of comprehension, of justifying the state church by broadening its limits to embrace all respectable Protestant denominations. The other was a new and detailed description of the interdependence of church and state and a search for new methods to insure their harmonious relation.

Recourse to the principle of comprehension was natural. Some such scheme was the obvious refuge of any established church faced with increasing denominational variety, as is shown by Virginia history in the 1780's.¹² In addition, the legal situation in New England invited such a reformulation. Massachusetts law asserted both denominational equality and the citizen's obligation to support religion, and in 1814 Dwight plausibly interpreted the similar Connecticut situation for the benefit of his Yale seniors:

'Ecclesiastical establishment' is a term that does not apply to religion as it is supported in Connecticut. More properly speaking, we should call the system for its support the Legal Establishment of the Worship of God. All classes of Christians are here invested with the same privileges. . . . They are left to their own choice of the mode and manner of worship; but they are required to contribute to the support of some public worship or other.¹³

Yet it is noteworthy that subtle changes of tone were now evident. Dwight's statement was less a commentary on law than an apologetic, and a constitutional situation which earlier had been regarded as disagreeable necessity was now acclaimed as evidence of interdenominational solidarity and love. Fortunately, intellectual supports for such revision lay at hand. English Congregationalism, faced with similar problems, had early developed the idea of a plural Establishment, to which the state, governed only by "the common light of Christianity," would give its benevolent and indiscriminative support. The theological basis of this concept, a view of the Holy Spirit leading men to ever newer and truer understandings of God's Word and providing an ex-

periential unity in which doctrinal differences could be submerged,¹⁴ had not been prominent in American Puritanism, but New England divines must have met the idea in the works of great English Non-conformists which, as President Heman Humphrey of Amherst said, "stood upon conspicuous shelves in the bookstores or lay nearer at hand upon the counter." In any case, during the eighteenth century suggestions of reconstruction along these lines began to be heard in America, as in Ezra Stiles' optimistic prophecy of 1785:

After the present period of deism and sceptical indifferentism . . . perhaps there may arise a succession of civil magistrates who will not be ashamed of the cross of CHRIST, nor of patronizing his holy religion; with a generous catholicism and expanded benevolence towards all of every denomination who love our LORD JESUS CHRIST in sincerity and truth.¹⁵

By the beginning of the nineteenth century this approach was being widely used to reinterpret the traditional insistence on a state church and a godly magistrate. Now, of course, a public ecclesiastical system was defended as support to the gospel in general rather than to Congregationalism. "The vital principle of our system," declared Beecher, was that "every man shall pay according to his property for the support of religious instruction as a public civil benefit." Withdrawal of support, preachers charged, would lead to the decay of civilization. Jedidiah Morse even told a Charlestown congregation that the very suggestion was inspired by "the hostile designs and insidious arts of the French Government."¹⁶ Perhaps most revealing was the aplomb with which the Reverend Eliphalet Gillet annexed the principle of religious liberty to the practice of public support:

This is religious liberty. All denominations are permitted to choose their religion . . . but no one, to the detriment of the other, established or preferred by law. . . .

But as some think they have no civil liberty, unless they are at liberty to do any thing they please . . . so there are some who think they have no religious liberty, unless they have liberty to have no religion at all. The laws of our State require people to worship God: but it is left to their own choice whether they do it through the mediation of Christ, or the Virgin Mary, or without any mediation at all.¹⁷

In similar fashion divines reinterpreted the religious character of the state. There were to be no religious tests for office-holders. Nathanael Emmons denied that "none but the subjects of Christ's kingdom are qualified to rule in the kingdoms of men," while Dwight added the practical afterthought that no test law could work when infidels would not hesitate at an oath. Nevertheless, Emmons insisted that "none are fit to be intrusted with civil power, who believe and maintain, that all religion and religious teachers are a burden rather than a benefit."¹⁸ A real danger was seen in naturalistic theories of

political origins. Numerous sermons and tracts repeated that "government is founded on the law of God . . . the theory founded on the social compact is false." In this connection, the silence of the Federal Constitution was disturbing. "It is highly discreditable to us that we do not acknowledge God in our Constitution," said Dwight, and in Beecher's famous allegory the "Tolerationists" could gloat: "We have cut off the young men by the Constitution from any relation to Christianity, in any form at all, more than if they were born in Turkey. We have thrown them back into a state of nature."¹⁹ No such error was made in the Massachusetts constitutions. As late as the proposed revision of 1820 Daniel Webster was "clearly of opinion" that "in so solemn a transaction as the establishment of a Constitution . . . we should keep in it an expression of our respect and attachment to Christianity—not, indeed, to any of its peculiar forms, but to its general principles."²⁰

New meaning was introduced into the concept of the mutual dependence of church and state as well. Controversy required that this mutuality be spelled out, and for this purpose divines condemned the philosophical optimism of political radicals, and returned to the Puritan heritage of distrust of the natural man. "Man is desperately wicked, and cannot be qualified for good membership in society without the influence of moral restraint," which in turn rests on "the laws and institutions of revelation." Time and again the lesson was driven home: "From the intimate and inseparable connections between morality and religion, arises a most manifest necessity of religion to a nation." History was drawn into service. Only France had attempted to establish a government without religion, with results "worse than an irruption of Goths and Vandals." (In historic contrast stood the early New England theocracy, "the most perfect state of society, probably, that has ever existed in this fallen world.") Dwight even presented the argument in language that New England farm boys might understand, teaching that opponents of the Establishment had no more logic than those who might plead "exemption from contributing for the support of roads, bridges, and other constructions of indispensable necessity, because they do not use them."²¹

Thus the church-state connection could be defended purely on the grounds of "public happiness and public security."²² But the difficulty of protecting this beneficent Christian connection under nineteenth-century American conditions still remained. The problem was complicated, moreover, by the democratic movement which was already widening the electorate and making government representative of the undifferentiated mass. In any real sense, this problem was to remain unsolved in this early period, but suggestive beginnings were made. Beecher, in

particular, once again displaying his uncanny sense for revitalizing the old New England concepts, was experimenting with ways of recreating in a democracy the church suffrage in politics which had been legally terminated in the colonial era. Revivals could be and were exploited. But in addition there was great interest in the manipulation of public opinion by pulpit and press. As early as 1806, Beecher advocated using this weapon in a campaign against duelling. "Ministers of different denominations, all united, would be able to effect it perfectly," he thought, for "the votes of professed Christians of different denominations are too numerous and important to be thrown away." By 1812, he was ready for organized action. He had now developed his plan for interdenominational societies to foster these principles, and in 1813 the first of these, the Connecticut Moral Society, was launched. The ambitious purpose behind this new departure could hardly have been more frankly revealed: "An influence is needed distinct from that of the government, independent of popular suffrage, superior in potency to individual efforts, and competent to enlist and preserve the public opinion on the side of law and order." These "local voluntary associations of the wise and the good" would "aid" the magistrate in the execution of the laws, purify the land, and turn away the anger of the Lord. "They constitute a sort of disciplined moral militia, prepared to act upon every emergency, and repel every encroachment upon the liberties and morals of the State."²³

These beginnings were still on a small scale. Serious exploitation of voluntary societies would have to await disestablishment. But it was significant that already plans were being drawn to make democracy safe for the theocratic spirit.

Despite these efforts, the defenders of the Standing Order failed to preserve the constitutional connection of church and state. By 1818 disestablishment had occurred in Connecticut, and in Massachusetts events were preparing for a similar outcome a decade and a half later. Yet the decision was not really clear. It could not be concluded that Republicans and "Tolerationists" had destroyed the theocratic outlook or won the intellectual argument, for in the defeat of the Establishment were many complicating factors. In both states the alliance with the Federalists was fatal. Discredited as the tool of wealth and suspected of disloyalty in the late war with Great Britain, the Federalist party declined, leaving the church with reduced political support. In addition, much unreformed Congregational bigotry and political stupidity gave the lie to the persuasions of the new conservative theories. Even Dwight and Beecher sometimes displayed a churchly arrogance which mocked the spirit of comprehension. The height of this folly was reached when Connecticut Congregationalism alienated the

Episcopalians, whose ecclesiastical principles might have made them natural allies.²⁴ In Massachusetts circumstances were still more complex. Here theological divisions split Congregationalists into two warring camps. After Channing's Baltimore sermon in 1819, the Unitarian controversy rendered difficult any united effort to save the state church. Indeed, theologically, the Unitarians' defense of the state connection was debilitated. For fusing natural and Christian law, they were soon to teach with Channing that governments ought to derive their form from "a constitution, the great lines of which are drawn in our very nature; a primitive law of justice, rectitude, and philanthropy."²⁵ Therefore, the state's dependency on the light of Christianity was less fundamental, and the intellectual foundation of an established church was partly undermined. Furthermore, the Unitarian schism effected the growing detachment of the orthodox from the Establishment. For in the Dedham case of 1820 the state supreme court decided that church property should go with the legal society instead of the church, and in eastern Massachusetts this worked greatly to the disadvantage of the orthodox. Subsequent disenchantment with the Establishment was rapid, and it seems likely that the church-state connections had lost most popular support long before official disestablishment in 1833.²⁶

Nevertheless, in Connecticut where this preparatory stage was absent, disestablishment came as a terrible blow to religious conservatives. Dwight did not live to see the final catastrophe, but Beecher was cast into deep anguish by the decisive vote. Catherine Beecher in later years recorded a youthful impression:

I remember seeing father, the day after the election, sitting on one of the old-fashioned, rush-bottomed kitchen chairs, his head drooping on his breast, and his arms hanging down. 'Father,' said I, "what are you thinking of?" He answered solemnly, 'THE CHURCH OF GOD.'

Beecher himself declared that the "injury done to the cause of Christ, as we then supposed, was irreparable."²⁷ The conservative defense and reconstruction had been vigorous and in some respects imaginative, but it had not been sufficient to the task. Now the hope of a broad Protestant Establishment on which it had been based was gone. Further adjustment and restatement were necessary if the theocratic tradition was to survive in the changing New England scene.

III

"For several days I suffered what no tongue can tell *for the best thing that ever happened to the State of Connecticut.*"²⁸ This often-quoted statement of Lyman Beecher suggests both the painfulness and the thoroughness of conservative readjustment, but not the eventual

acceptance of the liberal philosophy of church-state separation, as has sometimes been said. Instead, the year after Connecticut disestablishment Beecher was lecturing civil magistrates on their duties to the church as if nothing had happened. This constancy to the old loyalties was general, even though the necessity of accepting legal separation was gradually being recognized. The sermon preached before the Connecticut legislature in 1823 by Nathaniel W. Taylor, Beecher's closest friend and late pastor of the Center Church, New Haven, was typical. "There were dangers and evils without the change, it is believed, greater than exist with it," was Taylor's unenthusiastic judgment. But he then went on to repeat most of the essentials of Dwight's argument:

Why should not legislators, judges, magistrates of every description, with every friend of his country, uphold those institutions which are its strength and its glory? . . . Shall clamors about the rights of conscience induce us to throw away Heaven's richest legacy to earth? . . . But you will make men Christians. And what if we do? . . . But you will make sectarians. God forbid. We plead for no such influence. We only ask for those provisions of law, and that patronage from every member of the community in behalf of a common Christianity, which are its due as a nation's strength and a nation's glory.²⁹

The continuity displayed here was consciously promoted through later decades. Nowhere was there apology for New England's past. Seventeenth-century religious persecution was dismissed as a subordinate theme and the historic religious qualification for office justified as "a necessary measure, to prevent the ascendancy of new adventurers, having different principles, who might, had they been allowed to vote, have destroyed the foundations on which all our invaluable institutions now rest." Leonard Bacon in 1839 not only defended the Biblical legalism of the first governments, but asserted its contemporary validity: "If you believe the Bible to be a perfect rule of moral action, you are precluded from taking any exception against . . . the principle . . . that Christianity—the ethics of Christianity, should be the constitution of the commonwealth, the supreme law of the land." As late as 1849 Horace Bushnell rejoiced that Puritans were in some ways "actually opposed in thought or speculative view, to the very opinions and institutions, now regarded as being most distinctively American."³⁰

Yet disestablishment gravely affected the Puritan tradition. And as Beecher suggested, its effect was ultimately beneficial. Beecher bore witness to the invigoration of Congregationalism which followed the act of separation: "It cut the churches loose from dependence on state support. It threw them wholly on their own resources and on God." This testimony to new vitality was common, causing alarm to an elderly John Leland and impressing the delegation of British Nonconformists which toured America in 1835:

The Standing Order could not have stood its ground as a State establishment. It was inert and inefficient; the Dissenting community on the one hand, and infidelity on the other, were prevailing against it; while within itself, was engendered the worst forms of heresy. It is now placed on a level with its rivals, and it is equal to the best in the race of excellence.³¹

Specifically, what were the services of disestablishment to this revival of the theocratic tradition?

First, constitutional separation stimulated the completion of a radical reformulation of principles. The encumbrance of political alliances, emphasizing an older and now untenable theory of church-state relations and vitiating Congregational pretensions to denominational equalitarianism, was cast off. Accordingly, by 1823 Beecher had come to oppose any direct entanglement in the political process, though one of his reasons—that no party can “in a popular government, be sufficiently secure from change to render it safe”—indicated that his thinking on this issue was only partially reformed.³² Indeed, it was now not only possible but essential to explore new theoretical alternatives, for in the altered circumstances a convincing justification of theocracy depended on exploiting new departures.

Moreover, disestablishment now made it possible to disarm opposition by adopting the semblance of antitheocratic principles without actually embracing their meaning. For one thing, sectarian opposition was quieted by the apparent acceptance of voluntarism. Congregationalism no longer made exclusive claims to christianize the entire community. Indeed, the Second Awakening, promoted by Dwight and his party at least partly to strengthen the Standing Order, had already restored the insistence on the “gathered church.” With disestablishment, Congregationalism’s last tie with the more churchly conception of its mission seemingly was gone. Similarly, the opposition from the American liberal tradition was undermined. For New England clergy now uniformly spoke the language of religious freedom and discoursed on the “deadly embrace” of state churches. Heman Humphrey was only repeating the accepted view when he told the assembled Massachusetts ministry in 1830:

The kingdom of Christ is so far from being sustained and strengthened by the secular arm, that hitherto it has invariably languished when constrained to lean upon the civil power. Perhaps it never received a more terrible shock, than it did on that day, when its holy simplicity was eclipsed by the purple of Constantine.³³

So thorough was this change that even the Puritan legend was altered to fit the new requirements of the Puritans’ heirs. “Everyone knows that the settlement of New England originated in the love of religious liberty,” explained W. B. Sprague in 1825.

If in some instances, they may seem to have lost sight of these principles in their practice, who that considers the spirit of the age and the Omnipotence of habit but will find a ready apology for the error? But after all, they laid, broad and deep, the foundations of religious liberty.³⁴

And yet, despite this apparent conversion, the essentials of underlying Puritan assumptions were maintained intact.

Lastly and perhaps most significantly for future American history, church-state separation emancipated the Puritan tradition from its purely local reference. At last the New England ecclesiastical situation was constitutionally identical with that in the remainder of the Union. Consequently, any reconstruction undertaken for New England would also apply to the rest of the United States. Leading Congregational writers were soon aware of this too. By the 1820's provincialism had been shed, and references were ordinarily being made to the general American scene. Hence the theocratic tradition was no longer on the defensive. Just as New England's political conservatism was changing from a moribund Federalism to the vigorous Whiggery of the 1840's so also the Puritan heritage was preparing to awaken as the gospel of the "true American union" of church and people—a gospel which was to flourish in the Puritan homeland and successfully invade other denominations and sections.

This further reformulation preserved every essential element of the Puritan concept of a Christian commonwealth. State support to a national religious faith which in turn would keep the United States a Christian nation, a government informed by the light of Christianity, the organic union and interdependence of church and state—all were maintained. Only such adjustments were made as were required by the new constitutional situation. What were these adjustments?

Public support for a national church was still considered essential, but both the national church and the character of support were differently conceived. Enlarging on the concept of comprehension developed earlier, writers now demanded state support to a church co-extensive with the national community of Christians. In effect, the idea of a denominational grand alliance, so alarming to many Americans, was here being replaced by the more politically prudent concept of the church invisible in America. In 1851 Edwards A. Park put this change succinctly:

Some of our fathers erred in supposing that political government was intended to be the servitor of a specified *Visible* church. No visible church is pure enough to receive such a service. . . . But there is a purer church, invisible, composed of all men of all sects who love Jehovah with the whole soul and their neighbours as themselves, who love their country because it belongeth to him. . . . Now it is to enlarge the number and to augment the excellence of such men, that he who doeth all things for eternity hath ordained the State.³⁵

In addition, the nature of the support which rulers were to bestow was different. This became clear in the 1830's when Channing ascribed political ambitions to the orthodox and Moses Stuart replied, admitting, "We do fully believe that no good government on earth can be long maintained" without piety, "but this is an influence of religion on government and a connection with it which are *indirect*."³⁶ Emphasis on indirection was now conventional in discussions of the subject. The day might be gone when governors could call synods, recommend creeds, and force attendance at public worship, but they were not thereby emancipated from duties to the gospel. "Our civil rulers owe to God and their country now, the same illustrious piety, the same estimation of the doctrines of God's Word, the same attendance upon the ordinances of the Gospel and co-operation for their support, and the same strict and pure morality, which rendered the civil Fathers of our land so illustrious."³⁷

As this has already suggested, the religious character of the state was also retained. Though not so closely identified with confessionalism as formerly, rulers were still to be visibly sympathetic with the Christian cause. "There are certain guarantees of integrity, and of security to the general interests of religion, which as Christians, we are bound to require," said Beecher.

There must be such a belief in the being of God, and the accountability and future punishment, as lays a foundation for the practical influence of an oath, such exemption from immorality as will render the elevated example of rulers safe to the interest of public morals; such general approbation of the Christian religion and its institutions as will dispose them to afford to religion the proper protection and influence of government.³⁸

Of magistracy, as distinct from particular magistrates, even more was required. Government was still founded on divine institution, not civil compact. It was still obliged to heed revelation. "I hazard nothing," declared Heman Humphrey, "in saying that the Bible contains the only code of laws, or rather the elements of the only code, which can sustain our free government or any other like it." Certain that Mosaic law was as valid for Americans as for Israelites, Leonard Bacon would concede only that "we have learned to distinguish, better than they, between that . . . which was of absolute obligation . . . and that which was ordained in reference to the peculiar circumstances of the Hebrew nation."³⁹ The state's religious commitment even limited the freedom which it could legitimately offer. Moses Stuart thought that Jews, Mohammedans, pagans, and Deists might enjoy liberty in America, but not to the extent of showing contempt for Christians or blaspheming the Christian religion. Daniel Webster argued at law against the right of a Philadelphia philanthropist to establish a secular orphanage: "Christianity—general, tolerant Christianity—Christian-

ity independent of sects and parties—that Christianity to which the sword and the fagot are unknown—general, tolerant Christianity is the law of the land!” Because of this adjustment to an indirect connection of church and state New England leaders felt that they had digested disestablishment without injury. In 1848 Bela Bates Edwards could even reassure conservative European churches out of the American experience:

Perfect religious liberty does not imply that the government of the country is not a Christian government. The Christian Sabbath is here recognized by the civil authorities. . . . Most if not all of our constitutions . . . proceed on the basis of the truth of the Christian religion. Christianity has been affirmed to be part and parcel of the law of the land. . . . There is convincing evidence to show that this real, though indirect, connection between the State and Christianity is every year acquiring additional strength, is attended with less and less of exception and remonstrance.⁴⁰

But the work of reconstruction was not yet completed. It was necessary also to deal with that organic inter-relationship of church and state which Puritans had assumed and Dwight had made explicit as the state’s dependence on morality and religion. Now a further dimension of relevance appeared. Specific emphasis was placed on the services of religion to republics and particularly to the American republic. Conceivably, Old World monarchies and despotisms might rule by force and terror, but a free republic depended solely upon mass moral restraint. Thus “there is no form of government better than our own for a virtuous community; and none worse for a vicious community.” The problem was especially great since immigration and electoral reforms had placed government “within the reach of a perverted and profligate suffrage.” Beecher in 1829 could not be optimistic, but he knew that in Christianity rested the only hope of saving the American experiment: “It is hard to elevate the mass, and harder to sustain it; and none but by the help of God and his institutions have been able to do it.”⁴¹

Throughout the decades leading to the Civil War this argument was repeated with variations for each of the perils confronting America. Was the United States becoming huger in territory and population with every passing year? Heman Humphrey’s solution was “an immense moral power to control twenty, thirty, *fifty* millions of daring and enterprising republicans, spread over a vast territory.” Did sectional passions raise the specter of coming storms and bloody conflict? Beecher’s recourse was to “God’s government and the institutions of Christianity” inculcating the intelligence and moral principle capable of maintaining national unity. Were increasingly bitter partisan battles destroying the fraternal bonds of republican unity? Bushnell cited Christianity as an integrating center, for “if we go to the same churches

and tables of communion, receiving there the common principles and lessons of God's truth, and thence go forth to bless our country, as citizens . . . we may differ warmly and earnestly as to the mode, but we cannot be sundered into state factions."⁴² Lastly, were the American people moving apart in class and wealth? Was the republic threatened with bitter social division? Beecher admitted the situation: "There is pervading the entire class of relative poverty a strong feeling of dissatisfaction, as if they were injured, and as if the rich were the aggressors, and were revelling on the spoils which had been wrested from them." But he also knew where salvation lay. "Explosion and revolution" would never erupt, despite political radicals and universal suffrage, so long as Christianity fortified the mind and conscience. Thus the Christian gospel and its institutions were the real sustaining powers of American democracy. "On this influence depends our rise or fall—our glorious immortality or our hasty dissolution."⁴³ It is not surprising that the result should have been that fusion of patriotism, republicanism, and religion which was noted by foreign visitors. Here, in this complex, the triumph of the theocratic element over its alienation from the American liberal faith was revealed. At the death of Jefferson Heman Humphrey complained of the tendency to call every American statesman a Christian, but he had himself contributed not a little to the blurring of the distinction.⁴⁴

To safeguard this invisible union of church and state, Beecher, it will be recalled, had experimented with techniques for re-establishing the church influence in politics, even before the collapse of the Standing Order in Connecticut. These techniques were now further developed. In a democracy, Taylor warned, public opinion is "absolutely paramount." According to Beecher, the contest for its control was already raging, "and by this generation, in the city and in country, it is to be decided whether an evangelical or a worldly influence shall prevail." Hence it was necessary for Christians to close ranks and face the task together. "Religious principle must be applied throughout the nation, and no *one* denomination *can* do it." Revivals must be encouraged and the suffrage exploited. Every freeman must "inquire concerning the candidate for whom he is solicited to vote—is he an enemy of the Bible, or the doctrines and institutions of the Gospel;—is he a duellist, or an intemperate man, or a sabbath-breaker or dissolute, or dishonest?" The ultimate goal was a "public opinion which shall accord with the morality of the Gospel."⁴⁵

To implement this purpose organization was needed. Therefore, coincident with the fall of the New England Establishments, an expansion of interdenominational voluntary societies was undertaken. The Connecticut Moral Society of 1813 was the beginning of many

such foundations, spreading from New England to New York and the Middle West. These moral societies were seconded by organizations for allied purposes—tract societies, Bible societies, temperance societies, missionary societies, Sabbath School societies—all striving to extend “that influence which the law could no longer apply.” Concerning the motivation behind such foundations, Beecher was candid: “These are the providential substitutes for those legal provisions of our fathers, which are now inapplicable by change of circumstances.”⁴⁶ By the 1830’s the seriousness of such professions was being illustrated in effective political action. The General Union for Promoting the Observance of the Christian Sabbath had already launched a national campaign, deluging Congressmen with petitions against the carrying of the mails on Sundays, and in the next decade temperance societies were to begin winning public opinion to a program of legal action which secured its first striking victory in the Maine Prohibition Law. The re-establishment of the Christian interest in the politics of American democracy was taking place.⁴⁷

IV

The idea of a Christian commonwealth was once again a force in American intellectual history. Toward the end of his life a melancholy John Leland looked back to note that the menace of religious oppression “in the old way” had been vanquished only to have it return with the increased strength of a “Christian Phalanx.” “If my painful fears on this head are ever realized, the glory of America will depart—the blood and treasure expended in the revolution will all be lost.”⁴⁸ Though his understanding of the “new way” was confused, Leland did have a correct intuition of the restored vitality of the theocratic challenge. For these ideas now flourished outside the region and denomination where this rejuvenation had taken place.

The wider national reference of theoretical reconstruction after disestablishment had coincided with an actual expansion of New England peoples to the West. First upper New York state, then the Great Lakes area, then the far regions of the West had felt the imprint of Puritan culture. “Wherever Puritan blood has gone, Puritan traditions have been carried.”⁴⁹ Even Lyman Beecher went west, serving eighteen years as president of Lane Theological Seminary at Cincinnati. New England leaders were well aware of the importance of winning the interior where, asserted Beecher, “the religious and political destiny of the nation is to be decided.”⁵⁰ By mid-century the work was well in hand. In 1847 Bushnell might still urge that “OUR FIRST DANGER IS BARBARISM,” but he could also testify that

Vermont, Western New York, and a part of Ohio are already gained, and are now side by side with us, helping us to support the downward pressure of the emigrant masses. We have only to make sure, in like manner of all the States this side of the Mississippi, and then the critical point is, in my estimation, past.⁵¹

And a year later this same satisfaction rang in Bela Bates Edwards' statement that "the basis of our national character, the nucleus around which the other elements are forming, is . . . the British or the English Puritan."⁵²

In this work Congregationalism now had the assistance of other denominations. Episcopalians, Methodists, Reformed—all produced spokesmen for a Christian commonwealth, and probably all were indebted to some degree to New England thought in harmonizing their traditional ecclesiastical teachings with American institutions. Curiously, even the Baptists were not immune to this influence. Presbyterianism also entertained theocratic concepts in their new form. This denomination had a congenital affinity for notions of Christian state and people, but its colonial experience with religious variety in the Middle Atlantic area and with Anglican persecution in the South had made it receptive to the ideology of separation. Now many Presbyterians turned toward the theocratic pattern. Points of contact between the two denominations, such as the "presbyterianism" of the Connecticut Standing Order, the co-operation under the Plan of Union in the West, and the easy migration of men like Lyman Beecher from the one church to the other probably helped to strengthen this type of thinking.⁵³

But the most fundamental mark of the renewed vitality of the theocratic tradition was its considerable absorption and transformation of the popular concept of American destiny. Drawing on a New England intellectual current as old as the voyage of the *Arbella*, ministers once again spoke of a chosen people and its mission. At the beginning of the century, Nathanael Emmons, lifting this theme from its Puritan locus, had designated the American nation as the last peculiar people whom God means to form before the End. Beecher completed this fusion of the older Puritan concept with the American sense of world mission. After centuries of failure, he said, the moral renovation of the earth was at last being begun through God's great goodness. Yet to convince the world a great example was needed. Asia, Europe, even England could not provide it. Only America with its freedom and evangelical Christianity could "blow the trumpet and hold up the light."⁵⁴

Thus the American concept of destiny was baptized. For many, ideal America was not so much a great experiment in human rights as the Christian republic held up providentially for the instruction of

the world. American democracy with its religious roots and mission was a thing apart—certainly far different from Continental European democracy which, as Beecher complained, did not keep the Sabbath.⁵⁵ By mid-century this view had attained much popularity and in the Civil War Lincoln would be invested with the role of Christian statesman struggling to save this “last, best hope of earth.”⁵⁶

In this way conservative Protestantism adjusted to the American situation and yet escaped engulfment by an alien philosophy. Its concept of a free Christian nation blending religious loyalty and good citizenship won a place beside other American interpretations of church-state relations expressed in political liberalism and sectarian Protestantism. Often in later American history all were to be curiously and illogically intertwined. This would be most evident in attitudes, but even in law the “true American union” would draw strength from such things as congressional and military chaplaincies, ecclesiastical exemption from taxation, and official homage to the Christian calendar. And while heavy Jewish influx in the later nineteenth century would force a last adjustment in theocratic thinking to *Judeo-Christian* bases, the ancient Puritan axioms would persist as even modern Americans expected displays of piety from public officials, nourished inchoate convictions that atheists could not qualify as perfect citizens, viewed politics as a theater for moral crusades, and applauded the commonplace that American democracy rested on religious foundations. Something of the proportions of this victory was already sensed at the mid-point of the nineteenth century. “Be not afraid,” counselled Horace Bushnell, envisioning a future in which the theocratic outlook would be firmly established in American ideals:

As Church and state must be parted in the crumbling and disintegrating processes of freedom; so, in freedom attained, they will coalesce again, not as Church and State, but in such kind of unity as well nigh removes the distinction—the peace and love and world-wide brotherhood established under moral ideas, and the eternal truths of God’s eternal kingdom.⁵⁷

1. Heman Humphrey, *Miscellaneous Discourses and Reviews* (Amherst: J. S. and C. Adams, 1834), pp. 128-129.

2. Throughout this essay “theocracy” is used in this original sense. The use of the word to suggest clericalism has no place in this paper.

For the shaping of the New England theocracy see especially Perry Miller, *The Establishment of Orthodoxy in Massachusetts* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1933). The allusion to Norton is drawn from John Norton, *The Heart of New-England Rent at the Blasphemies of the Present Generation* (Cambridge: Samuel Greene, 1659), p. 57.

3. In this essay attention is given exclusively to Massachusetts and Connecticut. New Hampshire provided for public support to religion until 1819, but its history on this issue was complicated and its intellectual leadership for the refashioning of the Puritan tradition was not significant. For the New Hampshire situation see Anson Phelps Stokes, *Church and State in the United States* (New York: Harper, 1950), I, 431-432.

4. Miller, p. 260. quoting Thomas Hooker, *A Survey of the Summe of Church Discipline* (London, 1848), pt. IV, p. 57. For discussion of basic English Puritan

- views of church and state, see A. F. Scott Pearson, *Church and State* (Cambridge: University Press, 1928).
5. Nathaniel B. Shurtleff (ed.), *Records of the Governor and Company of the Massachusetts Bay in New England* (Boston: William White, 1854), III, 240; *Fundamental Orders of Connecticut* (New Haven: Yale, 1934), p. 3; *Records of . . . Massachusetts Bay*, I, 87; P. W. Coons, *The Achievement of Religious Liberty in Connecticut* (New Haven: Yale, 1936), pp. 2, 8.
 6. See Jacob C. Meyer, *Church and State in Massachusetts 1740-1833* (Cleveland: Western Reserve, 1930), pp. 1-132.
 7. Stokes, I, 423-424; Isaac Backus, *A History of New England with Particular Reference to the Denomination of Christians called Baptists* (Newton: Backus Historical Society, 1871), II, 201.
 8. Isaac Backus, *Government and Liberty Described* (Boston: Powars and Willis, 1778), p. 6. For the Baptists generally in New England, see Meyer, pp. 32-68. Backus' *History* is still useful.
 9. For this development, see especially Perry Miller, *The New England Mind: From Colony to Province* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1953); Alice M. Baldwin, *The New England Clergy and the American Revolution* (Durham: Duke, 1928); Herbert M. Morais, *Deism in Eighteenth Century America* (New York: Columbia, 1934); Benjamin F. Wright, *American Interpretations of Natural Law* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1931), pp. 13-99.
 10. For the rise of New England Republicanism, see William A. Robinson, *Jeffersonian Democracy in New England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1916), especially pp. 128-150; Richard J. Purcell, *Connecticut in Transition 1775-1818* (Washington: American Historical Association, 1918), pp. 227-298. A good example of the fusion of the sects with the Republicans can be seen in Nehemiah Dodge, *A Discourse Delivered at Lebanon in Connecticut on the Fourth of March 1805* (Norwich: Sterry and Porter, 1805). L. F. Greene (ed.), *The Writings of the Late Elder John Leland* (New York: G. W. Wood, 1845), pp. 118-119. The quotation comes from Leland's Virginia career, but represents his later attitude as well.
 11. Backus, *History*, II, 202.
 12. Stokes, I, 387-392.
 13. [Timothy Dwight], *President Dwight's Decisions of Questions Discussed by the Senior Class in Yale College in 1813 and 1814* (New York: Jonathan Leavitt, 1833), p. 87.
 14. Insight into this development will be found in Geoffrey F. Nuttall, *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1947) and in Winthrop S. Hudson, "Denominationalism as a Basis for Ecumenicity: A Seventeenth-Century Conception," *Church History*, Vol. XXIV, No. 1 (March, 1955), pp. 32-50. For an example of these ideas in seventeenth-century English Congregationalism, see Jeremiah Burroughes, *Irenicum* (London: R. Dawlman, 1646). Cromwell's Establishment attempted to implement this conception.
 15. Humphrey, pp. 404-405; Ezra Stiles, *The United States Elevated to Glory and Honour* (Worcester, Massachusetts: Isaiah Thomas, 1785), p. 124. Note also Cotton Mather at the beginning of the century. See e.g. *Manductio ad Ministerium* (Boston: Thomas Hancock, 1726), pp. 115-128.
 16. Lyman Beecher, *Works* (Boston: J. P. Jewett, 1852-1853), II, 124-126. Beecher felt, even as he spoke, that the system was gone beyond recall. Jediah Morse, *A Sermon Exhibiting the Present Dangers* (Charlestown: Samuel Etheridge, 1799), p. 21.
 17. Eliphalet Gillet, *A Discourse Delivered on the Annual Thanksgiving in Massachusetts. November 29, 1804* (Augusta: Peter Edes, 1804), p. 9.
 18. Jacob Ide (ed.), *The Works of Nathanael Emmons* (Boston: Congregational Board of Publication, 1871), V, 253; Dwight, pp. 113-114.
 19. Dwight, pp. 238, 111; Charles Beecher (ed.), *Autobiography, Correspondence, Etc. of Lyman Beecher, D.D.* (New York: Harper, 1864), I, 396.
 20. Stokes, I, 425.
 21. Beecher, *Works*, II, 92; Dwight, pp. 87-88. For a particularly positive statement of this argument, note Beecher, *Works*, II, 142-143: "The religious and civil order of this State commenced their existence together and together they will live or expire. One was made for the other, or rather one was made by the other. Without the religious order to form the conscience and establish the fear of the Lord, our civil institutions which have stood almost two centuries, could not have endured a year. Let the ancient churches in this State, one after another, be broken down, and the doctrines which have purified and cheered them cease to be heard, and soon Connecticut will be Connecticut no more."
 22. Dwight, p. 88.
 23. Beecher, *Works* II, 106, 63, 95.
 24. Purcell, pp. 336-345.
 25. William E. Channing, *A Sermon Preached at the Annual Election May 26, 1830* (Boston: Dutton and Wentworth, 1830), p. 32.
 26. Meyer, pp. 160-220.

27. Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 344. Some allowance should perhaps be made for Beecher's weakness for self-dramatization. When the news of Dwight's death was brought to Beecher in the pulpit, he raised his hands and "said, with a burst of tears, as if he beheld the translation, 'My father! my father! the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!' The congregation, with an electric impulse, rose to their feet, and many eyes were bathed in tears." *Ibid.*, pp. 330-331.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 344.
29. Beecher, *Works*, II, 218, 234; Nathaniel W. Taylor, *A Sermon Addressed to the Legislature of the State of Connecticut* (New Haven: A. H. Maltby, 1823), pp. 34-36.
30. Humphrey, p. 103; Leonard Bacon, *An Address before the New England Society of the City of New York* (New York: Ezra Collier, 1839), pp. 17-18; Horace Bushnell, *The Fathers of New England* (New York: George P. Putnam, 1850), p. 20.
31. Beecher, *Autobiography*, I, 344; Leland, pp. 580-581, 670; Andrew Reed and James Matheson, *A Narrative of the Visit to the American Churches by the Deputation from the Congregational Union of England & Wales* (London: Jackson and Walford, 1835), II, 141.
32. Beecher, *Works*, II, 276.
33. Humphrey, p. 177.
34. W. B. Sprague, *The Claims of Past and Future Generations on Civil Rulers* (Boston: True and Greene, 1825), p. 9.
35. Edwards A. Park, *The Indebtedness of the State to the Clergy* (Boston: Dutton, 1851), pp. 53-54.
36. Moses Stuart, *Miscellanies* (Andover: Allen, Morrill, and Wardwell, 1846), p. 314. Humphrey also taught an indirect influence, but made it clear that this was no adoption of the Baptist principle of separation. He complained bitterly of the opposition to "imbuing the laws of the state with the spirit of Christianity." "You are reproached for not resting satisfied with mere religious toleration....and if you venture to intimate that the government of a Christian people ought to respect and countenance religious institutions, or at least not to frown upon them, you are most charitably accused of being actuated by ambition and motives of worldly gain, rather than by Christian principle." Humphrey, pp. 171-172.
37. Beecher, *Works*, I, 337-338.
38. *Ibid.*, II, 279.
39. Humphrey, p. 135; Bacon, p. 22. See also Beecher, *Works*, I, 176, 189-190.
40. Moses Stuart, *A Sermon Delivered before His Excellency Levi Lincoln Esq. Governor* (Boston: True and Greene, 1827), pp. 14-15; [Daniel Webster], *Mr. Webster's Speech in Defence of the Christian Ministry, and in Favor of the Instruction of the Young, Delivered in the Supreme Court of the United States February 10, 1844 in the Case of Stephen Girard's Will* (Washington: Gales & Seaton, 1844), pp. 51-52; [Bela Bates Edwards], *Writings of Professor B. B. Edwards* (ed. Edwards A. Park) (Andover: W. F. Draper, 1858), I, 489-490. Webster lost his case.
41. Taylor, p. 15; Beecher, *Works*, I, 130, 137. This theme is common in all these works.
42. Heman Humphrey, *Valedictory Address Delivered at Amherst College* (Amherst: J. S. & C. Adams, 1845), pp. 20-21; Beecher, *Works*, I, 111-112; Horace Bushnell, *Politics under the Law* (Hartford: Edwin Hunt, 1844), p. 17.
43. Beecher, *Works*, I, 118-122, 331-332. A related argument was sometimes used in connection with social ferment. Christianity, by establishing moral absolutes, erected limits to the powers of radical democracy. Mark Hopkins preached before the Massachusetts legislature in 1839 on the text, "We ought to obey God rather than men," (Acts 5:29), applying it, not only (as traditionally) to conscientious disobedience to unchristian commands of authority, but to magistracy itself. "With us...there is little danger of direct oppression. The danger is that those who are in office...will, for the sake of immediate popularity, lend the sanction of their names to doctrines and practices, which, if carried into effect, must destroy all government." Mark Hopkins, *Miscellaneous Essays and Discourses* (Boston: T. R. Marvin, 1847), p. 348.
44. Humphrey, *Miscellaneous Discourses*, pp. 376-378.
45. Taylor, p. 4; Beecher, *Works*, II, 420; I, 336-337, 341, 337.
46. Beecher, *Works*, I, 335.
47. Accounts of the campaign against Sunday mails are given in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Age of Jackson* (Boston: Little Brown, and Co., 1946), pp. 136-140; John R. Bodo, *The Protestant Clergy and Public Issues 1812-1848* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1954), pp. 39-43; Stokes, II, 12-20. See also the outraged comments in Leland, pp. 555, 561.
48. Leland, pp. 580-581, 670.
49. L. K. Mathews, *The Expansion of New England* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1909), p. 250.
50. Lyman Beecher, *A Plea for the West* (Cincinnati: Truman and Smith, 1835), p. 11.
51. Horace Bushnell, *Barbarism the First Danger* (New York: American Home

Missionary Society, 1847), p. 26. Bushnell sees the North-east as the hope of civilization in America. The West is endangered not only because of primitive conditions prevailing there but also because "it gathers in the rude minded and impoverished families flying from slavery in Virginia, Kentucky, and Tennessee; together with such hordes of foreigners as the over-populated countries of Europe are obliged to spare." *Ibid.*, p. 17.

52. Edwards, I, 483.

53. This is brought out in Bodo, *passim*.

54. See Emmons, V, 169-180, 322-329; Beecher, *Works*, I, 14, 321-327.

55. Beecher, *Works*, I, 124.

56. See, for instance, the collection of sermons, *Our Martyr President, Abraham*

Lincoln (New York: Tibbals & Whiting, 1865). Henry Ward Beecher's sentiment was typical: "Republican institutions have been vindicated in this experience as they never were before; and the whole history of the last four years, rounded up by this cruel stroke, seems in the providence of God, to have been clothed, now with an illustration, with a sympathy, with an aptness, and with a significance, such as we never could have expected nor imagined. God, I think, has said, by the voice of this event, to all nations of the earth, 'Republican liberty, based upon true Christianity, is firm as the foundation of the globe.' (Applause)." *Ibid.*, pp. 45-46.

57. Bushnell, *Fathers*, pp. 42-44.

1960 Brewer Prize Contest

The American Society of Church History announces that its next Brewer Prize competition for a book-length manuscript in church history will conclude in 1960. The award will be announced at the annual meeting of the Society in December of that year. It will consist of a subsidy of one thousand dollars to assist the author in the publication of the winning manuscript, which shall be described on its title-page as the "Frank S. and Elizabeth D. Brewer Prize Essay of the American Society of Church History" and shall be published in a manner acceptable to the Society. If competing essays are otherwise of equal quality, preference will be given to those dealing with topics related to the history of Congregationalism. Complete manuscripts in final form, fully annotated, must be in the hands of the Secretary, Professor Winthrop S. Hudson, 1100 South Goodman St., Rochester 20, New York, by September 15, 1960. There must be two copies, a typescript and a first carbon, on standard weight paper, double-spaced, with a left-hand margin of at least an inch and one-half.